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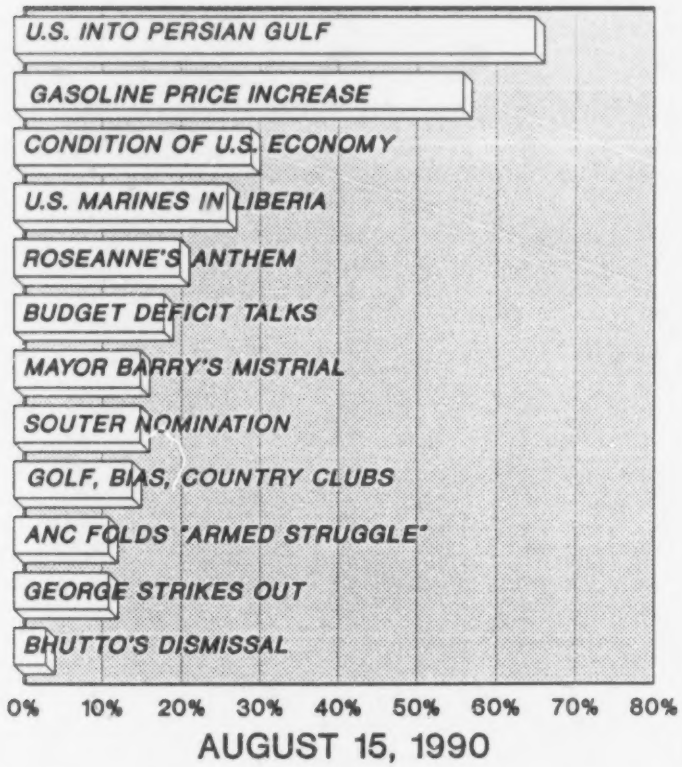
Times Mirror News Interest Index

Public Interest and Awareness of the News



AUGUST 15, 1990

Times Mirror Center
for The People & The Press

Times Mirror
Center for
The People &
The Press

NEWS

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FOR RELEASE: WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 15, 1990

Times Mirror News Interest Index
August 1990

Public Interest and
Awareness of the News

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AMERICAN PUBLIC RIVETED TO NEWS OF IRAQ AND SAUDI ARABIA

At week's end 66% of the American public said they were following news about the Iraqi invasion and the deployment of American forces to Saudi Arabia ***very closely***. Events in the Middle East now dominate public consciousness to an extraordinary degree. An unparalleled 85% of Times Mirror's nationwide telephone sample volunteered this, in an open-ended question, as the most important news event of the month.

This is a significantly higher level of interest than has been recorded for news about other actions involving U.S. armed forces or other major breaking international stories. For example, 60% followed news of the invasion of Panama ***very closely***, 58% U.S. air strikes against Libya and 50% the opening of the Berlin Wall. Never before has the Times Mirror News Interest Index recorded a single news story that has been seen as ***important*** by nearly so many Americans. The previous high watermark on this measure was 56% for the invasion of Panama in January.

Attentiveness to news about gasoline price hikes here at home has attracted nearly as much public interest as the military situation abroad. Fifty-seven percent of the public are following these stories very closely. News about gas price gouging is equally interesting to Americans in all parts of the country, in all age categories, to men and women, and blacks and whites.

The public is not only interested in the Mideast story, but is also reasonably well-informed about it. Two-thirds majorities know that the Soviet Union is supporting U.S. efforts to get Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait (66%) and that other countries will be sending forces to Saudi Arabia to defend against an Iraqi invasion of that oil-rich kingdom (64%).

If Saddam Hussein's army had not invaded Kuwait, news about the condition of the economy would have been the top story of the month. Fully 30% of the public said they were following very closely news about the condition of the economy over the past four weeks. This is an unusually large percentage of Americans to say they have been attentive to economic news. In May, just 18% said they were following very closely news about increasing interest rates and higher inflation.

Public interest in recent efforts by the Administration and Congress to cut the budget deficit was more consistent with past patterns of response. As was found in June, fewer than one in five (18%) said they followed very closely news about this subject.

There was also consistency in the size of the audience for news about the President's nomination of David Souter to the United States Supreme Court. Only sixteen percent said they followed the story very closely. The same number (17%) said they followed very closely news of the Bork nomination when that controversial appointment was dominating the headlines in the fall of 1987. Interest in news about Souter fails to reflect the intensity of interest usually related to stories about the abortion issue. It is of no greater relative interest to women or to young people.

The Marine landing in Liberia attracted the close attention of 27% of the public. Interest in this story showed no clear demographic pattern, except that blacks were somewhat more likely than whites to be interested (33%). This is striking because blacks are much less interested than whites in the situation in the Middle East (67% to 51%).

However, the biggest difference in news interest by race had to do with South Africa. ***Forty-seven percent*** of blacks said they followed very closely Mandela's announcement that the African National Congress (ANC) would end its armed struggle. In contrast, just ***8%*** of whites did so, resulting in a 12% overall rating for news of the ANC's historic change in policy.

Domestic stories with racial elements showed the same pattern. News of Mayor Barry's mistrial which broke during our interviewing period was followed very closely by 16% of the public on Saturday and Sunday night of this past weekend. However, among African-Americans, 30% followed news of the trial's outcome very closely, compared to 14% among whites.

This is the third measure of public interest in the Mayor's problems in the Times Mirror News Interest Index and the lowest level revealed yet. His arrest in February drew 28%, and his trial in July attracted 22%.

The controversy regarding the racial policies of country clubs that host major golf tournaments attracted a relatively small but racially skewed audience. Nationwide, 15% said they paid close attention to this news - among blacks that figure was 36% (vs 13% among whites).

Also in the world of professional sports, Major League Baseball's decision to compel George Steinbrenner to give up control of the Yankees attracted a meager national audience. Twelve percent said they followed the story very closely. Among men, and in the East, interest was predictably greater but still modest -- 19% and 20% respectively.

Roseanne Barr's controversial rendition of the national anthem attracted a larger audience (21%) than did Steinbrenner, because men and women showed equal interest in this story.

Americans, men and women alike, paid almost no attention to the dismissal of Pakistan's Prime Minister, Benazir Bhutto. Four percent said they followed the story ***very*** closely and another 14% said they followed the news ***fairly*** closely.

The public gives the press better than average grades for its coverage of the Mideast situation, despite the fact that there have been few pictures of troops in Saudi Arabia or video accounts of the fighting in Kuwait. Thirty-six percent rated Mideast coverage as excellent. Typically, major national and international stories are given an excellent rating by less than a quarter of Times Mirror respondents.

When asked about information they would like to have regarding the Mideast situation, the public expresses the most interest in hearing more about how other countries are reacting to the situation (37%). Twenty-five percent reported they want to know more about how U.S. troops are being deployed, and another 25% are most interested in the effects of the crisis on gasoline prices and the economy. Only 8% want to know more about the historical background of the Middle East.

PERCENT FOLLOWING EACH NEWS STORY "VERY CLOSELY"

	Iraq's Invasion of Kuwait	Nomination of David Souter to U.S. Supreme Court	George Steinbrenner Decision	Recent Increase in Gasoline Prices	Dismissal of Pakistan's Prime Minister Bhutto	N
Total	66	16	12	57	4	(1213)
Sex						
Male	71	18	19	58	4	(608)
Female	60	14	6	55	4	(605)
Race						
White	67	17	12	57	4	(1024)
*Non-white	56	9	11	55	4	(182)
Black	51	9	11	56	3	(87)
Age						
Under 30	64	7	14	54	2	(265)
30-49	66	16	9	53	4	(488)
50+	67	22	14	62	5	(444)
Education						
College graduate	80	28	13	51	6	(331)
Other college	75	18	10	63	4	(317)
High school grad.	62	11	13	56	3	(402)
Less than h.s. grad.	45	9	12	55	2	(157)
Region						
East	66	20	20	54	2	(268)
Midwest	66	16	9	55	3	(313)
South	64	15	10	61	5	(380)
West	68	12	12	54	3	(252)

Question: Now I will read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past month. As I read each item, tell me if you happened to follow this news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely.

*Non-white include blacks

CONTINUED...

... CONTINUED

	Reports About U.S. Economy	Roseanne Barr/ National Anthem	The Budget Deficit	The ANC's Policy Change	U.S. Marines to Liberia	Country Club Contro-versy	Mayor Barry's Mistrial
Total	30	21	19	12	27	15	16
Sex							
Male	34	20	21	13	28	18	18
Female	27	21	16	12	26	12	13
Race							
White	30	21	19	8	26	13	14
*Non-white	32	18	16	33	33	25	26
Black	33	15	14	47	33	36	30
Age							
Under 30	19	19	8	15	24	14	13
30-49	28	16	15	10	27	15	17
50+	41	27	30	14	30	16	17
Education							
College graduate	40	19	25	12	26	22	25
Other college	31	19	20	13	31	13	13
High school grad.	27	21	14	13	27	13	13
Less than h.s. grad.	26	25	18	11	24	14	14
Region							
East	36	23	21	14	28	14	19
Midwest	24	18	18	13	28	11	12
South	35	22	20	13	28	19	19
West	26	21	16	8	24	14	12

Question: Now I will read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past month. As I read each item, tell me if you happened to follow this news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely.

**Non-white include blacks*

PRESS COVERAGE RATINGS OF NEWS STORIES

STORY FOLLOWED MOST CLOSELY

	Iraq's Invasion of Kuwait	Recent Increases in Gasoline Prices
Excellent	36	14
Good	50	38
Only Fair	10	30
Poor	2	16
Don't know	2	2
Sample Size	(901)	(86)
	100	100

PRESS PERFORMANCE

	MAY 1989	JUL 1989	AUG 1989	SEP 1989	OCT 1989	NOV 1989
Excellent	19	26	25	19	32	41
Good	43	42	45	50	45	41
Only Fair	24	21	21	22	18	13
Poor	10	10	8	7	3	3
Don't Know	4	1	1	2	2	2
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

	DEC 1989	JAN 1990	FEB 1990	MAR 1990	APR 1990	MAY 1990
Excellent	22	33	23	26	23	28
Good	45	48	50	48	54	49
Only Fair	25	14	19	20	16	17
Poor	6	3	5	4	4	5
Don't Know	2	2	3	2	3	1
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

	JUNE 1990	JULY 1990	AUG 1990
Excellent	25	21	30
Good	51	50	48
Only Fair	18	21	14
Poor	4	6	6
Don't Know	2	2	2
	100%	100%	100%

Question: In general, how would you rate the job the press has done in covering (STORY FOLLOWED MOST CLOSELY IN Q.3); excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The survey results are based on telephone interviews conducted under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates among 1,213 adults, 18 years of age or older, during the period of August 9-12, 1990. For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling and other random effects is plus or minus 3 percentage points. In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

TIMES MIRROR NEWS INTEREST INDEX
AUGUST 1990
August 9-12, 1990
n = 1,213

INTERVIEWER NOTE: PLEASE FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH THE RESPONSE CATEGORIES

Q.1 What do you think is the most important news event that happened in the nation or in the world in the past 4 weeks? (DO NOT READ)

<u>International Stories</u>	
Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and the deployment of U.S. forces to Saudi Arabia	85
The dismissal of Pakistan's Prime Minister Bhutto by Pakistan's President	0
Political changes taking place in the Soviet Union	0
Political changes taking place in Eastern Europe	1
The pledge of Nelson Mandela's African National Congress to end the armed struggle in South Africa	0
The deployment of U.S. Marines to Liberia to protect the lives of Americans caught in the civil war	1
<u>Domestic Stories</u>	
The nomination of David Souter to the U.S. Supreme Court/Justice William Brennan's retirement	*
Major League baseball's decision to force George Steinbrenner to give up active control of the New York Yankees	0
Recent increase in the price of gasoline	2
Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy	*
The controversy surrounding the way Roseanne Barr sang the National Anthem at a San Diego Padres baseball game	*
Attempts by Congress and the Administration to find ways to reduce the budget deficit	0
Problems with the Hubble space telescope	0
The controversy over the exclusion of blacks from membership in many country clubs at which national golf championship matches are played	0
Washington DC Mayor Marion Barry's trial ending in a mistrial	0
OTHER SPECIFY ----------	4
Can't say/None	7
	100

Q.2 Now I will read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past month. As I read each item, tell me if you happened to follow this news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely. (READ AND ROTATE LIST)

		Very Closely	Fairly Closely	Not Not too Closely	at all Closely	DK
a.	Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and the deployment of U.S. forces to Saudi Arabia	66	21	7	5	1=100
b.	The nomination of David Souter (PRONUNCIATION SUITOR) to the U.S. Supreme Court to replace Justice William Brennan	16	27	27	29	1=100
c.	Major League baseball's decision to force George Steinbrenner to give up active control of the New York Yankees	12	17	26	45	*=100
d.	Recent increase in the price of gasoline	57	27	10	5	1=100
e.	The dismissal of Pakistan's Prime Minister Bhutto (PRONUNCIATION BOO-toe) by Pakistan's President	4	14	30	52	*=100
f.	Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy	30	36	18	15	1=100
g.	The controversy surrounding the way Roseanne Barr sang the National Anthem at a San Diego Padres baseball game	21	23	27	28	1=100

CONTINUED...

		Very Closely	Fairly Closely	Not Not too Closely	at all Closely	DK
h.	Attempts by Congress and the Administration to find ways to reduce the budget deficit	19	30	27	23	1=100
i.	The pledge of Nelson Mandela's African National Congress to end the armed struggle in South Africa	12	27	30	30	1=100
j.	The deployment of U.S. Marines to Liberia to protect the lives of Americans caught in the civil war	27	32	23	17	1=100
k.	The controversy over the exclusion of blacks from membership in many country clubs at which national golf championship matches are played	15	23	24	37	1=100
*l.	Washington DC Mayor Marion Barry's trial ending in a mistrial	16	33	26	24	1=100

*Interviews were conducted Saturday and Sunday (August 11-12, 1990) among 394 respondents.

Q.3 Which one of the stories I just mentioned, have you followed most closely? (DO NOT READ LIST. ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE.)

		Story Followed Most Closely
a.	Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and the deployment of U.S. forces to Saudi Arabia	72
b.	The nomination of David Souter to the U.S. Supreme Court to replace Justice William Brennan	1
c.	Major League baseball's decision to force George Steinbrenner to give up active control of the New York Yankees	2
d.	Recent increase in the price of gasoline	8
e.	The dismissal of Pakistan's Prime Minister Bhutto by Pakistan's President	*
f.	Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy	3
g.	The controversy surrounding the way Roseanne Barr sang the National Anthem at a San Diego Padres baseball game	3
h.	Attempts by Congress and the Administration to find ways to reduce the budget deficit	1
i.	The pledge of Nelson Mandela's African National Congress to end the armed struggle in South Africa	2
j.	The deployment of U.S. Marines to Liberia to protect the lives of Americans caught in the civil war	1
k.	The controversy over the exclusion of blacks from membership in many country clubs at which national golf championship matches are played	1
l.	Washington DC Mayor Marion Barry's trial ending in a mistrial	1
	CAN'T SAY	5
		100

IF RESPONDENT SAID '99' CAN'T SAY IN Q.3, SKIP TO Q.5

Q.4 In general, how would you rate the job the press has done in covering (STORY FOLLOWED MOST CLOSELY IN Q.3); excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

		STORY FOLLOWED MOST CLOSELY	
		Iraq's Invasion of Kuwait	Recent Increase in Gasoline Prices
30	Excellent	36	14
48	Good	50	38
14	Only Fair	10	30
6	Poor	2	16
2	Don't know	2	2
100		100	100

Q.5 Is it your impression that the Soviet Union is supporting our efforts to get Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait or is the Soviet Union opposing our efforts to get Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait?

66	Supporting
15	Opposing
19	Don't know
100	

Q.6 Is it your impression the other countries will be sending armed forces to Saudi Arabia or is it your impression that only U.S. forces are being sent?

64	Other countries will be sending armed forces
30	Only U.S.
6	Don't know
100	

Q.7 Which one of the following aspects of the situation in the Mideast would you most like to know more about?

25	How U.S. armed forces are being deployed
37	How other countries are reacting to the situation
25	What effects this situation will have on gasoline prices and the economy
8	The historical background of the Mideast
2	None (VOLUNTEERED)
3	Don't know
100	

TIMES MIRROR DATABASE
PUBLIC ATTENTIVENESS TO MAJOR NEWS STORIES
(1986 - 1990)

PERCENT FOLLOWED
VERY CLOSELY

80 Explosion of the Space Shuttle Challenger (July 86)

73 Destruction caused by the San Francisco earthquake (Nov 89)

69 Little girl in Texas who was rescued after falling into a well (Oct 87)
66 **IRAQ'S INVASION OF KUWAIT AND THE DEPLOYMENT OF U.S. FORCES TO SAUDI ARABIA (AUG 90)**
60 Invasion of Panama (Jan 90)
60 Destruction caused by Hurricane Hugo (Oct 89)

58 U.S. air strikes against Libya (July 86)
57 **RECENT INCREASE IN THE PRICE OF GASOLINE (AUG 90)**
53 Crash of a United Airlines DC-10 in Sioux City, Iowa (Aug 89)
52 Alaska Oil Spill (May 89)
51 Supreme Court decision of flag burning (July 89)
50 Opening of the Berlin Wall between East and West Germany (Nov 89)
50 Flight of the space shuttle (Oct 88)

49 Murder of Marine Lt. Col. Higgins in Lebanon, and negotiations to free the other hostages in the mideast (Aug 89)
49 Drought and its effects on American farmers (Aug 88)
48 TWA hostage crisis that took place last summer in Beirut, Lebanon (July 86)
47 Political upheaval in China (July 89)
47 Supreme Court decision on abortion (July 89)
46 Nuclear accident at Chernobyl in the Soviet Union (July 86)
46 The freeing of two Americans who had been held hostage in the Mideast (May 90)
43 News about the presidential campaign in 1988 (Oct 88)
42 Hot weather this summer and the greenhouse effect (Aug 88)
42 Downing of an Iranian passenger plane by a U.S. Navy ship (Aug 88)
40 Bush administration's plan to deal with this country's drug problem (Sept 89)
40 The stock market crash (Oct 87)

39 News about the presidential campaign in 1988 (Aug 88)
38 Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's visit to the U.S. for a Summit meeting (June 90)
38 Drug use and efforts to combat it (Jan 90)
38 U.S. Navy escort of Kuwaiti oil tankers in the Persian Gulf (Sept 87)
37 U.S. Navy escort of Kuwaiti oil tankers in the Persian Gulf (Oct 87)
37 Stories about Dan Quayle, the Republican Vice-Presidential candidate (Aug 88)
37 Sentencing of Oliver North (July 89)

PERCENT FOLLOWED VERY CLOSELY

35 Attempts to change the abortion laws (Dec 89)
35 Hijacking of the Achille Lauro cruise ship in the Mediterranean (July 86)
35 Explosion and fire on the U.S. Battleship Iowa (May 89)
34 Reports about flooding in Texas and other southwestern states (June 90)
34 The war between the Colombian government and the major drug traffickers (Sept 89)
33 Crash of the Colombian airliner near Kennedy airport in New York (Feb 90)
33 Congressional hearings about the Iran-Contra affair (Sept 87)
33 Guilty verdict in the trial of televangelist Jim Bakker (Oct 89)
31 The celebration of Earth Day (May 90)
31 The World Series (Oct 88)
31 Flight of East German refugees to West Germany (Oct 89)
31 Oliver North trial (May 89)
30 **REPORTS ABOUT THE CONDITION OF THE U.S. ECONOMY (AUG 90)**
30 Freeing of jailed black South African leader Nelson Mandela (March 90)
30 Banishment of Pete Rose from baseball for life (Sept 89)
30 The Democratic convention (Aug 88)
30 President Bush's call for higher taxes to help reduce the federal deficit (July 90)

29 Reports about the fires in Southern California (July 90)
29 Lithuania's declaration of independence from the Soviet Union and Moscow's response (April 90)
29 Suicide in Boston of Charles Stuart who murdered his pregnant wife and blamed it on a black man (Feb 90)
29 Political changes taking place in Czechoslovakia, Hungary and East Germany (Jan 90)
29 Political changes in East Germany and the flight of refugees to West Germany (Nov 89)
29 Attack and sexual assault on a female jogger in Central Park, New York, by a group of youths (May 89)
29 Failed coup attempt against Panamanian strongman Noriega (Oct 89)
28 The death of 87 people in a fire at a social club in the Bronx, New York (April 90)
28 Political changes taking place in the Soviet Union (March 90)
28 Arrest of Washington's Mayor Barry on drug use charges (Feb 90)
28 The revolution in Romania (Jan 90)
28 Political changes taking place in Czechoslovakia, Hungary and East Germany (Dec 89)
28 Problems at nuclear reactor plants (Oct 88)
28 The end of Gary Hart's candidacy and the Donna Rice allegations (Sept 87)
27 **THE DEPLOYMENT OF U.S. MARINES TO LIBERIA TO PROTECT THE LIVES OF AMERICANS CAUGHT IN THE CIVIL WAR (AUG 90)**
27 Lithuania's declaration of independence from the Soviet Union and Moscow's response (May 90)
27 Acquittal of the owners of the McMartin Day Care Center in California who were charged with sexually abusing children (Feb 90)
27 The NFL playoffs (Jan 90)
27 The Republican convention (Aug 88)

PERCENT FOLLOWED
VERY CLOSELY

26 The death of Hank Gathers, a college basketball player, during a game (April 90)
26 Political changes taking place in Czechoslovakia, Hungary and East Germany (Feb 90)
26 Passage in Congress of a bill to bail out ailing savings and loan institutions (Aug 89)
25 Supreme Court's hearing of arguments in a Missouri abortion case (May 89)
24 Supreme Court decision that found laws against flag burning unconstitutional and the attempt in congress to amend the Constitution (July 90)
24 Nelson Mandela's visit to the U.S. (July 90)
24 The deployment of the Hubble Space Telescope (May 90)
24 The difficulties the government is having in getting people to fill out Census forms (May 90)
24 The NCAA Basketball playoffs (April 90)
24 Supreme Court decision regarding a person's right to die (July 90)
23 The attempt in Idaho to pass a bill that would severely restrict abortions (April 90)
23 The Greyhound bus drivers' strike (April 90)
23 Discussion of the reunification of Germany (March 90)
23 The World Series (Nov 89)
22 Washington Mayor Barry's trial (July 90)
22 The 54 year old Oregon woman suffering from Alzheimers who ended her life by using a suicide machine (July 90)
22 President Bush's visit to Colombia to attend a drug summit (March 90)
22 The Super Bowl (Feb 90)
22 Letter bombings of federal judges (Jan 90)
22 Discoveries made by the spacecraft Voyager 2 (Sept 89)
22 Trial of televangelist Jim Bakker (Sept 89)
22 April hijacking of a Kuwaiti airplane by Shiite Moslems (May 88)
22 Cease fire in the war between Iran and Iraq (Aug 88)
22 News about the presidential campaign in 1988 (May 88)
22 Charges that Pete Rose has bet on baseball games (July 89)
21 THE CONTROVERSY SURROUNDING THE WAY ROSEANNE BARR SANG THE NATIONAL ANTHEM AT A SAN DIEGO PADRES BASEBALL GAME (AUG 90)
21 Tensions between Moscow and the Baltic Republics of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania who wish to secede from the Soviet Union (June 90)
21 Discussions about German reunification (April 90)
21 Political changes taking place in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, East Germany and other countries of Eastern and Central Europe (March 90)
21 The scandal involving HUD (Aug 89)
20 The earthquake in Iran (July 90)
20 The Gorbachev/Bush summit (Dec 89)
20 Attempts by the U.S. government to depose General Noriega in Panama (May 88)
20 Post-season baseball playoffs (Oct 89)

19 ATTEMPTS BY CONGRESS AND THE ADMINISTRATION TO FIND WAYS TO REDUCE THE BUDGET DEFICIT (AUG 90)
19 Elections in Nicaragua (March 90)
19 Coup attempt against the Filipino government (Dec 89)
19 Attempts in Congress to repeal the new catastrophic health insurance plan (Oct 89)
19 Incidents of racial violence in New York City and Virginia Beach (Sept 89)
19 Discussions of a U.S. Soviet arms agreement (Sept 87)

PERCENT FOLLOWED
VERY CLOSELY

18 Special meetings between the Bush Administration and Congressional Leaders to find ways to reduce the federal deficit (June 90)
18 Continuing news about the Savings and Loan scandal (June 90)
18 Reports about renewed inflation and rising interest rates (May 90)
18 Senator Moynihan's proposal to cut social security taxes (Feb 90)
18 The stock market crash (May 88)
18 Conflict in the Middle East between Palestinians and the Israelis in the occupied territories (May 88)
17 Racial tension in New York City resulting from the Bensonhurst trial verdict and the black boycott of Korean grocers (June 90)
17 Discussions between the American and Japanese governments about trade issues (April 90)
17 A custody case involving a mother who went to jail and a little child taken to New Zealand by her grandparents (March 90)
17 Nomination of Robert Bork to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court (Sept 87)
16 THE NOMINATION OF DAVID SOUTER TO THE U.S. SUPREME COURT TO REPLACE JUSTICE WILLIAM BRENNAN (AUG 90)
16 WASHINGTON DC MAYOR MARION BARRY'S TRIAL ENDING IN A MISTRIAL (AUG 90)
16 The financial troubles of Donald Trump (July 90)
16 Dispute between the President and Congress over allowing Chinese students to remain in America (Feb 90)
15 THE CONTROVERSY OVER THE EXCLUSION OF BLACKS FROM MEMBERSHIP IN MANY COUNTRY CLUBS AT WHICH NATIONAL GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP MATCHES ARE PLAYED (AUG 90)
15 Education Summit held by Bush and the nation's Governors (Oct 89)
15 Ethics committee's investigation of Speaker of the House Jim Wright (May 89)
15 News about the Democratic candidates for the presidential nomination (Oct 87)
15 Conflict of interest allegations about Attorney General Ed Meese (May 88)
15 The scandal involving HUD (July 89)
14 Renewed fighting between government and the rebels in El Salvador (Dec 89)
14 House approval of a cut in the capital gains tax (Oct 89)
14 Spy scandal involving a U.S. Diplomat in Vienna (Aug 89)
14 Coverage of Democratic and Republican candidates for the Presidential nomination (Sept 87)
14 Pending divorce between Mike Tyson and Robin Givens (Oct 88)
13 Civil unrest and ethnic violence in Soviet Azerbaijan (Feb 90)
13 Resumption of fighting in Nicaragua between the Contras and government forces (Nov 89)
13 Elections in Virginia, New Jersey, New York City and other localities (Nov 89)
13 News about the Republican candidates for the Presidential nomination (Oct 88)
12 MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL'S DECISION TO FORCE GEORGE STEINBRENNER TO GIVE UP ACTIVE CONTROL OF THE NEW YORK YANKEES (AUG 90)
12 THE PLEDGE OF NELSON MANDELA'S AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS TO END THE ARMED STRUGGLE IN SOUTH AFRICA (AUG 90)
12 Marital breakup of Donald and Ivana Trump (March 90)
12 Solidarity's role in governing Poland (July 89)
11 The incident in Gaza in which a deranged Israeli killed seven Palestinians and the West bank riots that followed (June 90)
11 Legalization of banned black opposition groups in South Africa and the promise to free Nelson Mandela (Feb 90)

PERCENT FOLLOWED
VERY CLOSELY

10 Japanese purchase of Rockefeller center in New York City (Dec 89)
10 The spending and tax proposals made by Congressman Dan Rostenkowski to help reduce the budget deficit (April 90)
10 The Academy Awards (April 90)

9 The Aids conference in San Francisco (July 90)
9 May day protests in Moscow (May 90)
9 Bankruptcy of Drexel Burnham Lambert inc. (March 90)
9 Trial of Hotel owner Leona Helmsley for tax evasion (Sept 89)
9 Stories about the 20th anniversary of the Woodstock Music Festival (Aug 89)
6 Elections in Romania (June 90)
6 The visit to the United States of Vaclav Havel, the new president of Czechoslovakia (March 90)
6 Trip of high ranking officials to China (Jan 90)
6 The scandal involving the Japanese Prime Minister and other high ranking officials (May 89)
6 The scandal involving Congressman Barney Frank and a male prostitute (Oct 89)
4 THE DISMISSAL OF PAKISTAN'S PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO BY PAKISTAN'S PRESIDENT (AUG 90)
4 The civil war in Cambodia (May 90)
2 Tom Cruise's separation from his wife (April 90)